



So Many Constellations (Walk-Through)

Pleased to Meet You

One Exceeds Life



Crying Out Loud

Heavens

Temporal

Green Scare

Remains

Shadow Selfie

Grid

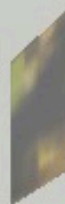
Shoot

Midnight

Memory of Events

Making a Small Circle

Flock



今



Soviel Gestirne, die  
man uns hinhält. Ich war,  
als ich dich ansah – wann? –,  
draußen bei  
den andern Welten.

O diese Wege, galaktisch,  
o diese Stunde, die uns  
die Nächte herüberwog in  
die Last unsrer Namen. Es ist,  
ich weiß es, nicht wahr,  
daß wir lebten, es ging  
blind nur ein Atem zwischen  
Dort und Nicht-da und Zuweilen,  
kometenhaft schwirrte ein Aug  
auf Erloschenens zu, in den Schluchten,  
da, wo's verglühte, stand  
zitzenprächtigt die Zeit,  
an der schon empor- und hinabund  
hinwegwuchs, was  
ist oder war oder sein wird –,

ich weiß,  
ich weiß und du weißt, wir wußten,  
wir wußten nicht, wir  
waren ja da und nicht dort,  
und zuweilen, wenn  
nur das Nichts zwischen uns stand, fanden  
wir ganz zueinander

So many constellations that  
are held out to us. I was,  
when I looked at you – when? –  
outside by  
the other worlds.

O these ways, galactic.  
O this hour, that weighed  
nights over for us into  
the burden of our names. It is,  
I know, not true  
that we lived, there moved,  
blindly, no more than a breath between  
There and Not-There, and at times  
our eyes whirred comet-like  
toward things extinguished, in chasms,  
and where they had burnt out,  
splendid with teats, stood Time  
on which already grew up  
and down and away all that  
is or was or will be –,

I know.  
I know and you know, we knew,  
we did not know, we  
were there, after all, and not there  
and at times when  
only the void stood between us we got  
all the way to each other.

Katri Naukkarinen :  
So Many Constellations  
30.5. – 27.6.

Is there a place for unstaged photography in art?

Katri Naukkarinen doesn't know what her next photograph will look like. She doesn't have an idea ready for what she might photograph or what the image would be about.

A camera travels with Katri Naukkarinen as a part of her life. Her method of taking the act of photography lightly is a result of years of learning and contemplating. With it she gathers and accumulates an archive she uses as a base for her installations. It is a positive and a concrete way to ponder the role of everyday thinking in the art of photography.

*I learned to photograph only after rejecting dates and strategies for taking pictures and most of all rejecting ideas for images: The ideas for a picture and the ideas concerning me as a creator of those images. Taking photographs should be meaningful here and now, not unlike existence.*

With her actions, Naukkarinen reflects not only her own perception but also the act of making the immediate environment meaningful. In principle the images could be seen as straight or documentary photography, flirting also with snapshot genre. However, an installation of an exhibition is another thing all together. The title for the exhibition is a quote from a poem by Paul Celan. So Many Constellations is a feeling of awe and a sigh when faced with all the meanings.

Katri Naukkarinen (1984) graduated as a photographer from the Institute of Design and Fine Arts in Lahti and is currently finishing her MA in Photography at Aalto University in Helsinki. Previously she has studied Aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. In her thesis she contemplates the possibilities and problematics of unstaged photography in the context of art. Naukkarinen's works have been most recently seen in solo exhibitions at B-Galleria in Turku, at a group exhibition at Galleria Huuto Jätkäsaari 1 and also at Summer School – an exhibition celebrating 40 years of the Union of Student Photographers of Finland – at The Finnish Museum of Photography in Helsinki and at TR1 Kunsthalle in Tampere.

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Valokuvagalleria  
Hippolyte  
Yrjönkatu 8 – 10 (sisäpiha)  
00120 Helsinki  
+ 358 9 612 33 44  
www.hippolyte.fi

Avoinnä  
ti-pe • 12 – 17  
la-su • 12 – 16  
Kiinni 20. – 22.6.



# So Many Constellations (Walk-Through)

Katri Naukkarinen › Master's Thesis  
Aalto University › School of Arts, Design and Architecture ›  
Department of Media › Photography › Spring 2015

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<b>Author</b> Katri Naukkarinen		
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### Abstract

Katri Naukkarinen's thesis *So Many Constellations (Walk-Through)* poses a question: Can unstaged photography be relevant to art today? The question is researched through her single body of photographic work, stretching over six years in time and manifested in publications and exhibitions.

The thesis consists of two chapters, in which the methodology and the processes of Naukkarinen's artistic work are opened up for examination.

The first chapter, "Photographing", examines the first and foremost method of her work: photographing as a natural part of the everyday life. The method puts the performative in a primary position in relation to its product, the image. Shooting without an image in mind has implications for questions concerning the role of the viewer in relation to that of the artist, and for the formation of meaning.

The second chapter, "Curating", examines the curative work Naukkarinen undertakes within her personal archive to initiate photographs as part of her body of work and produce them into installations.

The two chapters serve as a walk-through guide into the considerations that have led to the realization of the artistic part of the thesis: *So Many Constellations*, a solo exhibition held at the artist run non-profit Photographic Gallery Hippolyte in 30.5.–27.6.2014.

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**Keywords** archive, cogito, image, method, performativity, photographing, representation, snapshot

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# Table of Contents

Prologue: Directions – p.5

## 1 Photographing

- 1.1 Schizophrenia – p.8
- 1.2 Technicalities – p.11
- 1.3 Decisive Moment – p.15
- 1.4 On Performativity – p.18
- 1.5 Why -ing is Paramount – p.21

Interlude: The Logic of Items as Photographs – p.24

## 2 Curating

- 2.1 Photography of the Moment? – p.27
- 2.2 The Archive – p.30
- 2.3 Naming the Body – p.32
- 2.4 Two Incidents (On Irony) – p.34

Epilogue: So Many Constellations – p.38

End Notes

References

Additional Reading

Acknowledgements



# Prologue: Directions

Michael Famighetti: Do you ever take pictures, in the traditional sense?

Thomas Ruff: The last photographs that I took in the traditional way, with an 8-by-10 camera and negative film, were architectural photographs of my studio some months ago. And, of course, if an idea for a new series requires a traditional analog photograph, I will use the camera again. <sup>1</sup>

Thomas Ruff (b. 1958) and I (b. 1984) truly live in different worlds.

For him, the art of photography begins with an idea for a series. What follows is a consideration of a fitting technique. Technique is seen as something that calls for usage, and so, we finally arrive at a form of action: the controlled execution of photography (pun intended).

By downright disregarding the original question concerned with photographic action (asked in contrast to his then-current affair of making photographs) and instead going with the word “traditional” for the sake of turning the question to that of technique, it is easy to come to a speculative conclusion that he does not consider “shooting” to have much relevance for, or be anywhere near the essence of photographic art. This attitude of disregarding action is a common remnant of an old paradigm.

My take on the subject is very different, as will become clear in this thesis. During the course of it, I will go through influences and considerations that have led me to my methods. The two chapters of this written thesis serve as a kind of a walk-through, not to the meaning of, but to the considerations that have realized as the artistic part of the thesis: *So Many Constellations*, an exhibition held at the non-profit artist run Photographic Gallery Hippolyte during 30.5.–27.6.2014.

The journey fluctuates between personal and theoretical, as it moves through life events to questions that, surprisingly, have often something to do with

directions: Can the act of photographing have meaning in a world ruled by images? How can unstaged photography be relevant to art today? Why are there so few resources that consider the act of photographing meaningful for the image? What non-historical relevance can theories of new photography have for digital natives, to whom it is the original?

The questions have presented themselves as consequences of my actions that, quite simply, try to find out how/what one could, at this time, communicate in the context of art by photographing in the everyday environment. Through a devoted shooting I have ran into the plurality of my own image-conventions and traced paths of visual organization by which the environment seems to become meaningful – to me, but through a visual language we all share to some extent.

I do not possess answers to many of the questions I pose along the way. But through opening up my methods, it hopefully comes clear that I am dealing with the questions in all the seriousness of Rainer Maria Rilke's unfading advice:

*Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.* <sup>2</sup>

# 1 Photographing

## 1.1 Schizophrenia

*I learned to photograph only after rejecting dates and strategies for taking pictures, and most of all, rejecting image-ideas: ideas for pictures and ideas of me as the creator of those pictures. Photographing should be meaningful here and now, not unlike existing.<sup>3</sup>*

I had just moved to Tokyo with adequate knowledge of language and culture, and I knew exactly what I was to do. For years I had dreamt about it and finally it was happening. So I went along with my plans and begun shooting for a couple of series, driven by a subject related to Japanese aesthetics, with the middle format camera I had just acquired. Month into my perfect situation, I got the first negatives and felt absolutely terrified.

Now, the moment of taking the first glance at your newly developed negatives is always shrouded with anxiety. There are so many things that can go wrong between loading the film into the camera and that very moment. There might be a leak in the camera, the roll might not wind properly, there might be something inside the camera that scratches the film all the way from beginning to end. Or, at the developer's end, they might use the wrong chemicals, use the right chemicals in a sloppy fashion, cut the films not between but in the middle of frames, have something in their machines that scratches the film all the way from beginning to end, or pack the negatives when they are still wet, so the emulsion gets stuck to the plastic that should be providing them with protection. I have experienced each and every aforementioned moment of horror, but none could top the nightmare I was facing this time.

All the images I had produced so far with my steady plan looked like preconceptions (as they were), exoticism (as it most definitely was) and reeked of things that have romantic fascination as texts and ideas but are lacking the slightest reason to exist as photographs.

My life snapped into a complete turmoil as I came to terms with the fact that I had produced those images that could only be described as conventional, breathless, flat and idea-driven conceptual detritus not worth the silver gelatine. What the hell had I done? Why did I ever think it was a good idea? And more importantly, what was I to do now?

First, I changed my MacBook Pro's background image to one of Timo Kellaranta's broken horizons. The story behind goes that he took a look at these serene images he had produced but felt conflicted, so he begun piercing the negatives to find correlation with the current feelings.

I had always admired them for their performative aspect, their spatio-temporal instability literally breaking through the transparency of the medium, their precision in depicting the artist's emotional changes and for blurring the lines between the maker and the viewer. The new connection I established with the series was a full-on emotional "Die, image, die!"

But the image broke by itself. It happened fast and with force, allowing no evasive moves. Even if it threw me completely off, I couldn't help but feeling I had had it coming for some time. There was a crisis bubbling under my skin that I had kept in check, and suddenly everything got loose.

Browsing through the digital imagery I had already taken during the beginning of my stay, with a simple digital Canon IXUS pocket camera, with no conscious goals whatsoever, I got struck. The images were so honest and so precise in their presentation of what I wasn't conscious of at the time. I got into a nervous tremble that lasted for weeks. I had been completely unconscious of my ongoing self-reflection, yet there it was. For the first time I came to realize how deeply photography had intertwined with my life.

What happened next was not short of an epiphany. I came to notice I had two photographies. One was the goal-driven middle format professional artist kind that aimed specifically at producing images, and the other was the shoot-for-any-reason-on-available-equipment kind. How could I have ever represented a "thought" somehow more meaningful through the former kind of photography, when this latter photography already presented a plurality of "thinking".

This was the beginning of a chain of realizations that led me to consider photography anew. Or maybe I had never considered it that well at all? I had always thought of photography as an image production method, one that I could use by certain tactics, to convey certain messages. Or was this something I had learned during my professional education? Anyhow, we had always got along just fine, developed together, I thought, and now I was living a great rupture. I was lost. Lost as an image-maker and surprisingly lost as a person. And I knew a point of no return had long passed.

I knew I could not simply live it through and then continue from where I was before, but had to embrace and live the uncertainty of where I was, who I was and what was going to happen. Feeling as if I had lost my territory, the land scared me. I found myself on a journey, Anglo-American style:

*Deleuze wrote, in an essay praising Anglo-American literature over French, a wonderful comparison between two different modes of experience. The French mode comes with a back door, denying all ruptures by making them something to contemplate on from an exterior position. This side path of sorts offers off-the-road excitement, but safely arrives at a known destination. The Anglo-American mode is life: getting personally touched by experiences, and by that, never having the option to return.<sup>4</sup>*

At this point I only knew one thing for sure: Although now I was conscious of my actions, I needed to keep on shooting without being so concerned about the subject, what the images would communicate and how they would end up making sense and value before even shooting them.



## 1.2 Technicalities

*It is interesting that in contrast to the art of painting, whose noun has a gerund form suggesting action over time, photography does not. Though we do use the verb “to photograph,” we more often speak of “taking/making a photograph” or “taking a picture”.<sup>5</sup>*

The images I had taken were obviously not as solemn, clean and considered in their visual expression as the kind that are made to be so. While I knew, of course, it was a mere consequence of the method, I felt bad about losing the finer image.

I could not at first explain why, from the image point of view, I had switched to a way of production through which I could not show much of skill in technique. But if I were truly to follow this road – this road that had no clear definition, no reasoning behind it but was based on a strong feeling of must – it felt impossible to produce preconceived photographs for the sake of art ever again.

Another eureka followed when I realized, that the undecidedness of the image is key for allowing a thinking with the camera. A heavier machinery could never produce these images, because of its limitations in weight, size and speed of usage. And what’s more, its weight and presence would demand an effort that would make a difference to a normal state of being. Nor could a lighter one create the same visions through attempts in arranged pseudorealism: the preconceived image would shine right through and, more importantly, it would bring me back to arranging series before even shooting them.

To think with the camera, I knew it had to be present all the time, not just when I felt like it was somehow “time to do photography”. Simply put, if the camera is not present, the possibility of photography is not present either. And if I began choosing the moments for carrying a camera, I was al-

ready making decisions of the correct times, the correct situations and the correct environments to shoot in. No, it should be with me all the time.

Since one of my "things to do in Japan" was to participate in butoh dance classes at Kazuo Ohno Dance Studio in Yokohama<sup>6</sup>, an image came to me of a butoh performer being like a glass of water, filled over the top, only the surface tension keeping it from spilling. I felt this was what I needed to become, to feel a true urgency when something in my environment made me resonate.

The conscious journey into photography—first shooting begun chaotically, with me being in awe of the freedom of shooting just about anything, with no constraints, just for the joy of "why not". I had nothing to lose that I hadn't already lost, so there was no reason to mind the frowns and allusive words like "There's no meaningless piece of lint you wouldn't shoot, is there?" – partly because that would have been an understatement. I would shoot even without recognizing that my lens was pointed at a piece of lint.

Daido Moriyama's classic advice had struck me straight at heart, here as a more recent phrasing from a 2012 interview: "Take as many photographs you can: it's the only way to train your eyes, body and emotions."<sup>7</sup>

Shooting in amounts helps conquer the fear of shooting the banal. It could roughly be compared to the method of first writing down what's currently on the mind and continuing from there. Sometimes even the most simple titillations can lead to interesting material, and even if not, following them can clear the air and make room for a sudden relevance of something else. And who knows – what might seem silly today could be brilliant tomorrow. Shooting without constraints, you always also end up shooting the things you could see yourself shooting in advance, the things that would fit your current image. Now that, if anything, is truly horrifying! But it is part of the process of accepting all the possibilities as they present themselves.

Another good thing about photographing in amounts is that shooting makes shooting a lot easier. By this I do not mean becoming a better photographer with a better focus on their subject areas of interest, but the skill of giving in. The skill of muscles moving without thinking too much. It is always much more difficult to shoot after it's been a while.

Painters paint by painting, writers write by writing, but I had never felt encouragement – as if there was no point, or it was left for the amateur and the proletarian not worthy of a say in high art – for a serious photographic artist to photograph by photographing. Producing excess random imagery certainly does not help a brand. It felt great to find a way of photography that seemed to put value and urgency at the continuous doing, even if at this point I still could not say what the actual outcome would be.

An unfamiliar environment helped shooting with its new visuality, but I had to wonder, would my actions differ if I were back at my normal environment? I had to consciously unburden myself of the seeming obligation to “experience” the wonderfully strange things that popped in front of my eyes. Truly, there were treats that offered pre-destined positive experiences, to be acquired by simply submitting to the passively receiving role of an audience. Nice and easy.

However, I did not wish to stay in the status of a mere tourist, marvelling at the spectacle and acting the suggestions guiding me to fulfill my part as an outsider consumer of the catalogue available. Easier said than done! But I felt recognizing the spectacle, the image of it and of the audience, would lead the environments to a balance. It meant being mindful of what my real interests were, not just floating to places and participating things because there were certain experiences to acquire.

The thought regarding “the image of things” evolved to greater depths through daily life in such a sealed, inward society as Tokyo.<sup>8</sup> Having tried very hard for a while, I knew I would have no entry to it but from the very surface or the very underground.

I continued my photographing, and the seeming pointlessness of shooting suddenly felt like just the right thing to do. But with the digital pocket camera, my newly gained semi-consciousness of what I was to do had me checking the results simultaneously, enhancing the possibility of taking more shots with what I thought was a better framing, just in case – or even worse, delete images on the go.

Even if I was consciously not trying to delete images, the instinct was too deeply carved into my thumb’s trajectory. The possibility was leading me

away from trusting what I was doing: I was again becoming concerned with the image. A technical change was needed, and soon I was led to a great second hand camera shop where I found a Contax T3.

Changing back to film helped me build the necessary trust in myself. The T3 was more straightforward in its operation. Getting hit by a sudden feeling<sup>9</sup> I would Just Do It®<sup>10</sup> with no second guessing or bettering of the composition since I no longer suffered a reference. The impulse of my muscles moved through with lesser resistance, so I had less time to consider about whether to shoot or not, or if the photograph was justified in relation to – whatever really.

## 1.3 Decisive Moment

*I keep a camera handy. It's not because I want to shoot everything, but because I need it to live with me – like a loved one.*<sup>11</sup>

While still figuring out what I was doing, I came across an anecdote that Daido Moriyama had held photography courses where the only objective was to shoot 50 rolls a week for a month. Whatever the content of the images, the results would reveal the photographer something of their way of reflecting their environment.

I have no confirmation for this story, and probably remember the roll count wrong, but as an idea it still resonates with me, especially in times when high art photography has come so reduced to production that it's not uncommon to outsource the actual shooting. It's an interesting thought, being a photographic artist without sparing much time or thought photographing, just planning its execution (I seem to be loving this pun). On the other hand, bored with the questions of medium, more often photography is just seen as an (-) artist's means to an end.

Continuing with the unconfirmed story, many of the students didn't pass simply because they could not do it. Whatever the actual strain, I entertain a thought based on my own experiences, that it might have come to happen because they didn't feel it possible to make images meaningful enough in such pace, perhaps feeling frustrated by the limitations of their environment, or their unfamiliarity of photographing within.

Although I do not agree on many of Moriyama's answers on the essence of photography, exactly because they are his answers, I do agree with many of his methods and his driving questions – such as "Why do people (I) take photographs?"<sup>12</sup> that might at first seem like a simple question worth a simple answer, but comes to democratize artistry by questioning the artists' motives and methods through community.

A true classic in the field of snapshooting, Henri Cartier-Bresson was known for his search and capture of "decisive moments" contributed by particular actions of subjects or situations unrolling themselves in front of his camera, considered by him an extension of his eye. Moriyama on the other hand considers the shooting to happen through his entire body, being immersed in the situation instead of observing it.<sup>13</sup>

But Moriyama consciously locates his body in very certain situations, at very certain times, where certain imagery is readily available. Even if he is famous for shooting film at the pace of a machine-gun, not even necessarily looking through the viewfinder, he fetishises over certain things. This is where our methods differ fundamentally. But combining the thought of shooting through my entire body, situated in environments and shooting on an undefined feeling of resonance, couldn't it be thought that I, too, shoot for that decisive moment? A moment, that does not unroll itself before my eyes, but a sudden feeling that needs action right there, right then, before it passes?

It might seem a bit of a far fetch while looking at the photographs I have exhibited, since they do not necessarily seem to portray moments in a very momentary fashion. This is both an issue of representation and of conscious curation, both of which I will address later in more detail. Nevertheless it is clear, that none of the images would exist if the feeling didn't come to pass, and if I was not ready to shoot before it faded away.

This is the other side to the nature of the moment. Not unlike those moments captured by Cartier-Bresson, feelings, too, are fleeting. If I miss something, there is nothing to go back to. There are no photographs I might have missed, because they simply do not exist. I admit ignoring the feeling sometimes, when generally in doubt of myself, or feeling like I do not possess the mental capacity to follow through. Sometimes I don't even get the feeling for a number of days, and I might not even notice missing it.

These moments of "photographic fatigue" have helped me understand something essential of the nature of photographing. It demands enduring presence and openness. Willingness to question the habits and functionalities of everyday living, the very things that make it roll smooth and comfort-

able, is needed. More than perception, it is about an encounter with something unknown, something that needs submitting to, that always includes the possibility of throwing oneself off the current track. It might become a completely uninvited break, but more often something that seems like a confirmation. Feelings and thoughts tend to manifest themselves in the experience of the environment.



## 1.4 On Performativity

*With a small camera by her side, the performance of photography intertwines with each moment of her life rather than becoming a separate, deliberate act of image-making.<sup>14</sup>*

I have so far argued that my photographs are derivative of a constantly present possibility of photographing. The act is not a matter of instant reflection, that of simultaneously acting in and spectating on my own life. The reflection of the results is another phase of work that happens upon the archive and is examined in the 2nd chapter of my thesis. But even if not a conscious enactment of something, photographing as a certain kind of "doing" does have performative<sup>15</sup> qualities:

*There are many ways in which an especially "performative" art has been tried to outline. Many of the proposals have concentrated on the postmodern artwork and its performative operation in relation to a viewer or an audience, ending up with questions such as: "What kind of situation does an artwork produce? How does it situate its viewers? What kind of values, conventions, ideologies and meanings are inscribed into this situation?"<sup>16</sup>*

Dorothea von Hantelmann, for example, argues that from the 1960s onward, the creation and shaping of viewer experience has increasingly become integral to an artwork's conception. Instead of the ambiguous term "performative", she coins "experiential turn" to address the developments in affluent Western societies that have revalued experience as the focus of social, economic, and cultural activities.

In minimal art the experience has overthrown meaning (in the sense of something that the viewer could "read" or "discern") and detached from the coordinates of history, turning inwards to its own workings. A "rationality of experience" has risen alongside with a collection of common strategies to max-



imize and perfect this kind of experience. Aiming for the universal, the experience of these works could be described, as von Hantelmann puts it, "indeterminate and general". Since not reconciling the individual viewer with their experiences, the experience nurtures an individual subjugated to spectacle.<sup>17</sup>

Critical questions have risen about the quality and depth of experiencing this kind of "purely" performative artworks: "What, after all, is experienced? The experience of having had an experience? Does the strong focus on the subject play into the hands of a narcissistic consumer culture?"<sup>18</sup>

If the original shift in 1960s was from what the artwork "says" to what it "does," the question now, according to von Hantelmann, would be how to connect those both "to a concept of situated knowledge, an understanding of meaning as something that is always and inseparably linked to the situated and embodied subject." But what does this mean in relation to an artwork? In the very beginning of the article von Hantelmann situates the "performative in relation to art" to "an artwork" itself. Later she asks, "how can experience be charged with meaning, significance, and content?" and serves two artworks as examples, as if they were vessels through which certain experiences and meanings could be "discharged" upon a viewer.

Where does that leave the possibility for a viewer to be a "situated and embodied subject" in any other sense than a faceless member of an audience that's supposed to play their part in a made scenario that is the artwork?<sup>19</sup> Situating the performativity within the artwork seems to deny the meaning of any experiences (filled with meaning, significance and content) of the individuals on both ends of the artwork – the maker and the viewer – that are not fitting to the limits of this artwork's own performativity.

The same kind of artwork-situated performativeness is present in what is called the "performed photograph," perhaps best known by the works of Cindy Sherman, where a theatrical setting is constructed and a narrative performed for the sake of the camera. RoseLee Goldberg describes the viewer experience taking time and curiosity, and producing "the sensation of watching an elaborate private performance of the kind that clearly lay behind these detailed images."<sup>20</sup>

But there must be something else to an artwork than the viewer experiencing the pre-destined – or the artist producing artworks to be experienced as such?

In a recent article Richard Shusterman addresses this something else, missing from most discourses that begin with the artwork and end up with the experience and/or interpretation. The article is boldly titled "Photography as Performative Process" and it claims that "an important distinction can be made between photography and the photograph."<sup>21</sup>

Shusterman sees how the photograph is conventionally recognized as the goal of photographic work, and argues on behalf of there being more to photography than that. According to him, reducing photography to a photograph would introduce risk of reducing photographic aesthetics "to the aesthetics of an object (...) actually outside the photograph, hence allegedly beyond photography," thus leaving the value of photographing in question.<sup>22</sup> The inadequacy of semiotics is implied.

Besides our preoccupation with the photograph as object, one of the other factors obscuring the significance of photographing as a performative process is "the automatic mechanism involved in making a photograph – the fact that pressing the release of the camera shutter requires no special skill or thought and that the camera mechanism automatically does all the rest (...)"<sup>23</sup> Paraphrasing Susan Sontag, it is but an effortless gesture of the finger that produces a complete work.

These reasons neglect the "complex performative process that occurs *before* the shutter release and the camera's ensuing mechanism of producing the photographic image."<sup>24</sup> The neglect of the *before* reminds me of a legend about Picasso sketching in a park, being approached by a woman asking him for a portrait. Sketching for a moment, Picasso soon gives her the portrait. Asking about the price tag, she ends up ridiculing it in relation to the time the image took composing. Punchline goes: "Madame, it took me my entire life."

## 1.5 Why -ing is Paramount

One of the continuous struggles of my work is trusting the feeling on which I operate. The feeling is something very vague, unlike a conscious perception of visual contents or significations that would end up represented in a photograph by taking it. It is much more insecure and volatile: a sense of no-nothing but not anything particular either. Anima, perhaps, between those two conceptual securities of 0 and 1. But what does it mean to feel, sense or think, anyway?

*Bringing the unplanned results of this performance into an art space, Naukkarinen questions the construction of separate art photography. She identifies a central dilemma of photography as what was before [in the title] proposed a dilemma of thought: She already photographs.*<sup>25</sup>

"How to start thinking when I already am?" was the questioning title for a previous exhibition statement of mine. The title was inspired by the classic Cartesian cogito ergo sum -proposition, the consequences of which to Western culture I felt pretty harshly with in my previous thesis.<sup>26</sup> Since then I have come across a couple of compassionate readings that are surprisingly in line with the questioning title of my old exhibition statement. In his recent article on the matter, Jean-Luc Nancy notes that:

Descartes had indeed said that 'thinking' is nothing other than 'sensing.' In the Second Meditation, the only way out of doubt is through the following argument: even if I am dreaming, "it is very certain that I see, that I hear, that I feel warm: and this is properly what I call sensing; or to be more exact, this is nothing other than thinking." (...) [To] think is to sense, to feel, in other words, to relate to oneself in the act of relating to whatever it might be (an object, a dream, a presence, an absence). The self-sensing that belongs

necessarily to sensing (already in Aristotle, and already for him in dreams) is what creates thought, which is self-relation. But self-relation implies division just as much as it does unity, distance as much as proximity, alienation as much as intimacy.”<sup>27</sup>

The division of self-relation, the ability to sense, is to be affected by something from the outside. Thinking is interaction; resonation. The warmth sensed in the passage above originates from somewhere else than the mind itself: It seems that since Descartes is sensing, he is also situated.<sup>28</sup>

Jaakko Hintikka, who has written several articles on the proposition, suggests that the cogito ergo sum can also be read as a performative because in the formulation of the phrase, “someone has to do something himself in order to bring about the intended conviction.” So instead of having the ability to think, a singular being is actively thinking, or as Hintikka puts it, “thinking is going on.”<sup>29</sup>

Combining the two readings, perhaps the proposition could be opened up to something like: “I am constantly sensing, therefore I am constantly, situatedly being.”<sup>30</sup> But I should ask again, what does it mean to feel, sense or think, anyway? If thinking equals continuous sensing, with active relations to a reality wide enough to include dreams, is it only conscious?

Nancy suggests that for the pronounced Cogito to emerge, there must be a formless chaos preceding it. This “movement of thought (...) lies before the Cogito which posits a subject, [and] also lies before the enunciation of the subject.”<sup>31</sup> Himself a lover of bad puns, he names the chaos preceding Cogito as Chaogito. Chaogito would thus be all of the thinking-sensing-feeling that happens without pronouncing itself, that is unrepresentable, unverifiable and without figure.

But what does all this have to do with photographing? It is only through already-doing that one can escape the “now I shall do” and the “it is I who shall do (as is fitting to my image)”. The liminal state of shooting is like that of only noticing when the bag of candy is already gone, with not much recollection.<sup>32</sup> Consciousness of the possibility is enough. I have candy that I can eat. I have a camera with which I can shoot. That’s it. And honestly,

when I bring my films to the developer, I often have no recollection of the images they might contain. Photographing does not require a firm consciousness of the act.

The continuous, subconsciously performative -ing brings implications to the meaning of photography. The mark of professionalism shifts from executing and communicating an image idea (vertically) to a way of conversing<sup>33</sup> (horizontally) in the shared immediate environment. It is a democratizing act, for it does not seek the solitude of higher artistic grounds but invites anyone to do the same – from their point of view.

The -ing also has implications on the role of the viewer. The images are but from a point, as is the interpretation, yet we have overlapping knowledge by which we process the exhibited photographs meaningful. Authorship becomes but a relation between actual doers on both ends of the exhibited photograph. Who is photographing and who is looking comes to matter beyond the seeming neutrality of what is exhibited.

# Interlude: The Logic of Items as Photographs

Concepts of what counts as a photograph have been in great turbulence since the whole medium's conception, but since the digital age, especially the question of computer-made images has set a challenge for its definition. The question seems to be, according to Geoffrey Batchen, whether it is conceptually possible to accept an image that looks like a photograph as one, although only a computer visualisation, a simulation devoid of "the future anterior, the complex play of 'this has been' and 'this will be' that so animates the photograph."<sup>34</sup>

To say this discourse touches me personally would be romanticism. I am very much a digital native, grown into and producing art in a postinternet era, even if the photography I present is seemingly straightforward and traditional looking. Whether scanned, shot digital, completely overpainted in Adobe® Photoshop®, traced with Microsoft® Kinect® or fully simulated, in my world an image portrayed as photographic is read in a photographic image's context, the same way as Gerhard Richter's photo paintings or a collage hacked out of photographs but not looking the traditional part. For me, there is no original photography that was replaced by or negotiated as the "new" photography of today. Furthermore, it should never slip to notice that an absolute photograph has never existed, or an absolute photography for that matter, but instead many simultaneous (and at times contesting) ones.

If simulated images count as photographs by merely reminding photographs, the very necessity of a photograph being drawn by light on a light-sensitive surface no longer applies. So why not take another step, to another direction? A direction that addresses not the image and its disputable similarities, but the act of taking one?

Now, I don't think of myself as a hunter of images, nor do I feel like a collector of things. Instead of wanting to collect images for the sake of owning

them, they serve as mark-ups for the passing feeling. But the funny thing is, the same way I end up attaining photographs following this feeling, I have also ended up attaining some kinds of seemingly random items.

In light of the simulated image breaking historical and physical boundaries photograph-wise, how about breaking some photography-wise? My thesis turns against the current image-driven paradigm by suggesting a radical method where photograph follows photographing. If photographing is based on a feeling, what if at a given moment I feel the same about random items I encounter? Could random items be thought of as a photographs, if the motivation behind taking them was the same?

# 2 Curating



## 2.1 Photography of the Moment?

After figuring out the method of photographing, the biggest struggle was trying to realize what I was to do with the photographs. In the second chapter of my thesis I will describe the curation I do within my accumulative archive, seeking out combinations – that in turn lead to installations such as the artistic part of my thesis.

For a while I wondered, "Maybe it's a snapshot thing?", trying to gain some ground. Although familiar with the movement of new (professional) shapshooting, shown in exhibitions but even more prominently manifested in blogs and independent publications, I had obviously never related with it. I hadn't even held a blog for ten or so years. Now I begun to wonder if I should be in fact doing just that. In a famous passage from a letter directed at a young poet, Rilke advises to "have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves."<sup>35</sup> It is almost ridiculous, how impatiently a wanting mind begins to draw lines of reterritorialization just for the sake of security.

By coincidence, my opportunity to reflect on the snapshooting genre came almost at an instant. Rizzoli published a book called "Shoot – Photography of the Moment" accompanied with an exhibition I was able to visit at a department store gallery in Shibuya<sup>36</sup>. I was excited about maybe finding some answers for what I was doing, but walked out of the exhibition empty handed. Some of the images were definitely nice as singular images. But the exhibition was a mish-mash of images bound together by the mere usage of a small camera, with no idea behind the curation other than fitting something from everyone featured in the book. Well, it was quite what was to be expected of an exhibition showing in a department store gallery, subsidiary to a book edited by a former Editor in Chief of a glossy magazine.

I acquired the book only recently to better understand why the whole thing rubbed me the wrong way. Maybe I had originally missed the makers' thoughts on how these snapshots would matter as art?

The book has three essays titled "Snapshot", "Shoot" and "The Moment". In "Snapshot" photographer Stephen Shore ponders upon how the immediacy of shooting gives way to a less conditioned visual world, although immersed in a visual culture we "inevitably bring to every picture-making situation our visual conditioning what to photograph (content) and how to photograph it (structure)." <sup>37</sup> Yet according to him, whereas an amateur creates snapshots, an artist produces a special "ephemeral image referencing the visual style and the personal vision of the snapshot" with high intentionality. <sup>38</sup>

In "Shoot," professor of fashion imagery Penny Martin describes personal snapshooting as "legitimate working methodology for younger photographers desiring a shift from commercial photography to the art world" <sup>39</sup> and credits the reinvigoration of the medium to a "new generation of image-makers who find the expediency and fluidity of informal imagery ideally suited to the pace and tone of the online portfolios and blogs that have become central to the culture and promotion of their work." <sup>40</sup> Here, the overall feel is that snapshooting is something to do at the side of your work as a means of creating a viral personal brand.

Ken Miller, the aforementioned editor, begins "The Moment" by describing the difference of an amateur and a professional photographer's snapshots by saying the latter is deliberately engaged in the aesthetics (of "photographs that look like those of an amateur") and has an "ability to produce on demand the desired image." <sup>41</sup> This correlates completely with the mood set by Shore and Martin, where professionals engage to the visual style of amateur photography and consciously use it to produce images for their own promotion or for the client's needs in pseudorealism. All this talk is devoid of artistic interests <sup>42</sup> and almost insulting to the view I had adapted, thinking there must be value in shooting other than image production. Already disappointed and ready to give up, Miller comes in with a surprise:

We are invited to be participants in the photographer's experience, and this enforced intimacy further blurs the line between amateur and professional. This is, to some degree, the point: We are being shown our own images, in both subject and form. And in so doing, the photographer is engaging a visual culture that has progressed beyond a simple (and slow-to-evolve) two-way interaction between artist and subject. To use contemporary digital vernacular, these photographers are searching for image capture through the most immediate means possible, a process of involvement and documentation that speaks to the ways we increasingly define our lives through images, to the point where the creation of an image can provide both definition of self and creation of memory.<sup>43</sup>

A photograph is a notation of resonations, and as such very intimate. But curating is a conscious act aimed at showing. What was it then that I wanted to show? For sure it was not my intimate life I wanted to represent, or the spatio-temporal notation of "I was here and you weren't".

On the contrary, I came to notice I wanted to question whether we resonated to the the same images, the same meanings in our everyday environments (where ever those might be). I noticed some kind of images seemed to allow the possibility of this thought better than the others: those that didn't pinpoint their location or time or involve recognizable people. Could this be your image? Or perhaps become one?

## 2.2 The Archive

In the light of what I have written about the method of shooting, one could argue against the wholeness of it by referring to purposeful shoots, such as recording events and working as a commissioned professional photographer, creating images according to a plan. Aren't these another kinds of photographs?

The truth is, whatever the situation, when holding a camera and having the possibility to shoot, I am open for possibilities of shooting beyond what is pre-imagined. Whether the photographs are taken as part of an outside commission or not, they all end up in the same archiving system, as part of my personal stream which is subject to further considerations. But I never cut time for photographing, nor do I invent assignments for myself, save for practicing professional techniques (e.g. lighting).

As can be imagined by my method of shooting, the archive contains images of all describable kinds. They serve as a base of conscious reflection. By going through the archive, I try to make sense of what I am doing, what kind of things seem to interest me, and what kind of connections of images resonate with me at a given time.

I fluctuate between going through the digital(ized) archive and prints. I always have to get prints of my negatives, and I constantly print out the digital files. On the other side of the coin, I continuously scan photographs shot on film to be part of my digital archive. This phase of the work still hasn't got much to do with actual exhibition installations: it is a way of me getting a grip to the mass of images at hand.

I have developed a method of digital archiving that allows me to "sticky note" the images that currently feel relevant to my thought. I also write emails to myself about connections between images whenever they come to mind. Because the images and their connections are worked over and over

again, I have a chronology of whole sets of images that have seemed relevant at certain times. This allows me to follow my curational thoughts and their changes in a wholesome way throughout the years.

Sometimes I surprise myself: Why did I ever think this silly photograph had anything to give for the bigger composition? And then I might find it years later, just to notice it is exactly the piece I need for the whole to make sense. For the photograph to make sense.

The collections of images I gather within my archive are like snapshots of larger thoughts that seem to manifest themselves through the mass. At some point the collections begin to form connections strong enough for me to consider them as bases for exhibitions (or publications).

The collections serve as starting points for installations, but they are bound to be considered anew in relation to the exhibition space. I have never exhibited the same combination of works twice. So Many Constellations consisted of 15 works, 8 of which were previously unexhibited. It included 5 works that were part of my previous exhibition "Call Me Dog!" (with 22 works in total), of which one was exhibited in a different format. The planning of So Many Constellations begun with a core group of 5-6 images, of which two didn't make it in the end. Installation is key.

Going through the collections, some photographs seem to secure their place. Even if they would not become part of the next exhibition, they seem to resonate so well with the whole of my work that they should be included in the portfolio. Thus, they become part of my body of work.

## 2.3 Naming the Body

Giving a name is an initiation.

Getting to name a photograph already means it has enriching relations to my body of work. Naming a photograph takes in consideration these relations, yet I feel it is important to keep a hold of what's visible in the photograph. Verging on the tautological has become my way of nodding to the presence of language in moments of shooting and viewing. It is a tactique of not sending thoughts too far from what is depicted (as descriptive language would so express).

I often begin by listing everything that the photograph brings to mind, and trace back to what I (now) think might have triggered me to shoot. Often the name comes at the instant I realize the photograph will become part of my body of work, but sometimes I need to work on the form until I have the finished work in front of my eyes.

The image itself guides towards a certain type of form. "Pleased to Meet You" oozes power, and what better way to express it than print it as a huge flag? But the finished work's size and technique can also become meaningful for the naming, as was the case with "Memory of Events."

To describe the photograph, it is of a dark, statuesque anvil cloud, filling the sky with soon-to-break tension. For the exhibition I produced a set of around 130 unsigned exhibition prints by silk screen on maculature paper, pushing the screen to its limits and producing all kinds of wonky versions. No print was perfect, but there was a lovely variety of unperfectness.

The prints were like image recollections of an event, all having the same base but varying greatly – in some of the more extreme cases the base image was not distinguishable from the mess I had managed to produce. People were allowed to take one, and so the chosen print had the possibility of becoming part of their memory of the event of visiting my exhibition (itself also an event).

Here is an alphabetical list of all the 15 works exhibited in So Many Constellations:

Crying Out Loud (2009–14)  
Flock (2011–13)  
Green Scare (2010–13)  
Grid (2004–14)  
Heavens (2009)  
今 (ima: now) (2010–14)  
Making a Small Circle (2013)  
Memory of Events (2011–13)  
Midnight (2012–13)  
One Exceeds Life (2013–14)  
Pleased to Meet You (2013–14)  
Remains (2013)  
Shadow Selfie (2013–14)  
Shoot (2012–13)  
Temporal (2011–13)

Another point to make in the naming of my works concerns the way I mark the years. Since realizing I will be working with a huge archive of images as the material of my installations, I came to the conclusion that only the year of shooting the image or only the year of it becoming part of the edition wasn't enough. I needed both, where applicable, to further reveal my way of working.

The first year marks the photographing (2004–2014), and the second year marks becoming part of the body of work (2009–2014). As can be seen from the list, more often than not it takes time for the images to resonate with each other.



## 2.6 Two Incidents (On Irony)

Since my working-by-doing method is built upon great insecurities, I have gained greatly from the variety of discussions upon my work. But there are two particular discussions concerning two particular photographs, that have more recently guided me towards an understanding of the contexts I am working within. First of them is an anecdote on irony, the other on sincerity.

A grave difference of my conceptions to those of the postmodern generation's came clear to me in an instance, when a person in the marketing side of photography thought naming was the biggest issue of my work. They argued on behalf of naming them in a more interesting way: "Why name a work 'Heavens' when the much more interesting and personable option would be something like 'Heavens (Can Wait)'?"

Naming the works more "interesting" in such way would make me take part in the postmodern project of generating irony ad infinitum. Although not allowing to project an aire of snazz, and perhaps from the same viewpoint lacking humor, I feel transcending from the all too common irony an important venture.

I cannot see how the appendix would enrich the image. On the contrary, it binds the image to a simple remark – one that is already implied by the mere presence of the image, and of the name, and does not need to be written down by me as if I was only asking: "Get it?"

The other anecdote concerns a most oddly straightforward visual comparison. During a portfolio meeting with a writer/teacher from New York, "Remains" got picked up and compared to "Daily #15" from Thomas Demand's series "Dailies". The one obvious similarity between the images is that they both depict something stuck in a fence, but that's pretty much it. However, the thoughts that followed from the initial a-ha evolved into something more complex.



In "Dailies" Demand labours detritus into art, beginning with mobile images of small pieces of everyday disposables in pleasantly cropped environmental settings. The views are such as a comb on a ledge beneath a toilet mirror, a strawed soda cup lid laying on the ground, a piece of soap on the edge of a bathtub, or the aforementioned "Daily #15" with take away cups crammed into a chain link fence.

These ridiculously commonplace views are then legitimized into gallery – and a 150EUR faux leather cover fine art book – worthy art by meticulously reconstructing them as paper sculptures only to be destroyed after photographing. The exhibited photographs are then printed with an almost extinct dye-print method that demands tens of hours of work per proof.

Now, the visual similarity brought about the problem of appreciating common sights. Later that day, the same person included "Remains" in their lecture about current photographic movements under the category "Dumb Images".

I realize that so far this incident sounds like nothing worth examining in a thesis, where the point is to show the value of one's work. But what was meant by a "dumb" image was something unshameful of its potential commonness.<sup>44</sup> Something not trying too hard to be special is bound to seem "dumb" from the cultural viewpoint of postmodern cynicism, detachment and meta-referentiality.

The next real literary "rebels" in this country might well emerge as some weird bunch of anti-rebels, born oglers who dare somehow to back away from ironic watching, who have the childish gall actually to endorse and instantiate single-entendre principles. Who treat of plain old untrendy human troubles and emotions in U.S. life with reverence and conviction. Who eschew self-consciousness and hip fatigue. These anti-rebels would be outdated, of course, before they even started. Dead on the page. Too sincere. Clearly repressed. Backward, quaint, naive, anachronistic. Maybe that'll be the point. Maybe that's why they'll be the next real rebels. Real rebels, as far as I can see, risk disapproval. The old postmodern insurgents risked the gasp and squeal: shock, disgust, outrage, censorship, accusations of socialism, anarchism, nihilism. Today's risks are different. The new rebels might be artists willing to risk the yawn, the rolled eyes, the cool smile, the nudged ribs, the parody

of gifted ironists, the “Oh how banal.” To risk accusations of sentimentality, melodrama. Of overcredulity. Of softness. Of willingness to be suckered by a world of lurkers and starers who fear gaze and ridicule above imprisonment without law. Who knows.<sup>45</sup>

The exhausting quote above is the climax of David Foster Wallace’s essay diagnosing the malaise of contemporary American mass culture in the 90s as irony and ending up with a call for single-entendre principles. This might seem a bit strange since the phrase “single entendre” is widely considered a showcase in lacking wit, as in this definition from Wiktionary: “(humorous) A phrase that has a single, often bawdy, meaning and is lacking in subtlety or cleverness.”<sup>46</sup> Instead of calling for some kind of neo-naïveté or plain simplemindedness, it is a call against the irony (still) pervasive in our culture.

But what is so bad about irony? More than a rhetorical device, irony is an attitude based on the logic of detachment and deflection. It is a strategy that saves from actually having to commit or mean anything. It achieves this by creating a void where meaning and personal participation would reside, and filling it with style, loops of reference and other intellectual puzzles.

In conjunction with referring to the text above, Wallace is often dubbed a messiah for a movement titled New Sincerity. Although various resources tell the movement has been forming from the mid-80s, not much information is available other than it being a strategy of dissolving the postmodernist irony by suggesting things be taken seriously – unironically. But what is this thing called sincerity anyways? How can an artist, aware of everything their work entails, ever be sincere?

Traditionally sincerity was been thought of as an indication of one’s inner states on their outer surface. But the concept of sincerity has never been clear of its performative aspect, and the very division into an inner self and its outer manifestation already implies a split that assaults the integrative concept. With all its problems, especially since the age of theory, it has been suggested that the concept of sincerity might need a completely new theorization, for example, based on “a lack of internal division regardless of what shows on the outside.”<sup>47</sup>

In contrast, adopting a more flexible view of the self, Wallace's fiction has been said to ask, what happens when "the anticipation of others' reception of one's outward behavior begins to take priority for the acting self, so that inner states lose their originating causal status and instead become effects of that anticipatory logic."<sup>48</sup> By going through all the possible "positions" of those outside and inside of the so-called self, he ends up putting in doubt the referents of terms like self, other, inner and outer.<sup>49</sup> In his case, sincerity is a thorough consideration that is formed strategically through an empathetic awareness of these positions and their overlappings.

Wallace's essay is titled "E Unibus Pluram" meaning "Out of One, Many"<sup>50</sup> and a word play on one of the United States nation's mottos "E Pluribus Unum" meaning "Out of Many, One."

Call for single-entendre principles implies that the thoughts and actions of one matter. It is a call against the unification and standardization of thought and art. Committing to the point of "I genuinely think this is interesting" sets an environment for conversation open for critique, instead of introducing a tangential game of a nudge and a wink followed by the "Get it?" that at no point makes any pleads as to why "it" would actually be important for us to "get".

*And make no mistake: irony tyrannizes us. The reason why our pervasive cultural irony is at once so powerful and so unsatisfying is that an ironist is impossible to pin down. All irony is a variation on a sort of existential poker-face. All U.S. irony is based on an implicit "I don't really mean what I say." So what does irony as a cultural norm mean to say? That it's impossible to mean what you say? That maybe it's too bad it's impossible, but wake up and smell the coffee already? Most likely, I think, today's irony ends up saying: "How very banal to ask what I mean." Anyone with the heretical gall to ask an ironist what he actually stands for ends up looking like a hysteric or a prig. And herein lies the oppressiveness of institutionalized irony, the too-successful rebel: the ability to interdict the question without attending to its content is tyranny. It is the new junta, using the very tool that exposed its enemy to insulate itself.*<sup>51</sup>

# Epilogue: So Many Constellations

*The working name of my exhibition is Intimacy. The theme is very present through all my work, in the word's many senses. First and foremost it is related to my method of shooting (...) [through which] the photos are parts of my everyday stream of thought. I couldn't have had the idea to make them, just the impulse to take them. Also, since the subjects of the photos are varied, I like to think the viewer has to come close. A derivation of the word, intimation, points to indirect suggestions and hints. Being close, making sense between images... I feel we are having a conversation of sorts.<sup>52</sup>*

In previous chapters I have described my methods in photographing and curating. It is time to finish up with what has come out of them: the installation that serves as the artistic part of my thesis.<sup>53</sup>

Although the name was one of the last things for me to settle upon, it was the first thing I could work on since the exhibition was confirmed a year prior (when I was still working on the preceding exhibition "Call Me Dog!"). It was the wrapper, the final piece that binds the installation together as it will now bind this thesis.

The working name I had mentioned in my exhibition application was "Intimacy" – driven by the idea that such a name brings along instant image-visions of representational intimacy when true intimacy is anything but. I also related my shooting and curating to the word in a plethora of ways, some of which are described in the passage above. However, it served more as a marker for my thoughts on what kind of the direction the curation would take. The feel and the whole plot of the name felt too burdened from the get-go.

After coming up with nothing satisfactory<sup>54</sup> I gave in to my wise colleague's suggestion of taking a concentrated look at my bookshelf. I knew it the instance I saw the brown back of the book and picked up "Poetry as Experience", Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's analysis on Paul Celan's poetry.

I had no recollection of what it was that I were to retrieve from this book, but the search was easy thanks to a thin o-mikuji fortune strip – containing good blessings! – stuck between pages 64-65. The latter page contained an excerpt of the poem titled *So Many Constellations* that I had only once read in its entirety. On top of finding what I hadn't known I was looking for, the former page ended with a beautiful notion of a truly dialogical encounter only being possible by letting intimacy open up, by preparing "ecstatically, for the 'presence' of the other within oneself."<sup>55</sup> I had come a full circle.

The names of my previous exhibitions had all to some point addressed concepts of processual thinking or the formulation of meanings:

Thinking Process (2009)

Seeds (2010)

Mind the Membrane (2011)

Simple as Truth (2011)

Is Everything Deep Beneath the Surface?<sup>56</sup> (2013)

Call Me Dog! (2013)

Conceptually the name fits right in. As written in my exhibition statement, the name itself projects a feeling of awe, and even a sigh, when becoming faced with all the systems of signification. *So Many Constellations* is not a blunt statement, but clearly a sigh of wonder expressed towards somebody or something. It could even be a sigh of the exhibition visitor. Compared to the earlier names, its meanings open up to more directions.<sup>57</sup>

Reading the poem, it becomes clear that Celan is implying through absence. He writes of no-thing, building us affective paths into understanding – what? It is impossible to say, because it is exactly something that is impossible to write of. But the poem pulls us in, keeps us within, wanting to understand (perhaps our limited possibilities of understanding, leaving us feeling).

Connections between photography and poetry is a fascinating subject worth a research of its own. I will leave it be for now, with a note from Celan. Poetry (like photography, I would say) works through attention that resides not

in the precision of a tubular vision but, perhaps, a considerate openness that is mindful of the other, allowing meaningful encounters of personal kinds:

The attention which the poem pays to all that it encounters, its more acute sense of detail, outline, structure, colour, but also of “tremors and hints” – all this is not, I think, achieved by an eye competing (or concurring) with ever more precise instruments, but, rather, by a kind of concentration mindful of all our dates. ‘Attention’, if you allow me a quote from Malebranche via Walter Benjamin’s essay on Kafka, ‘attention is the natural prayer of the soul’. The poem becomes – under what conditions – the poem of a person who still perceives, still turns towards phenomena, addressing and questioning them.<sup>58</sup>



- 1 Famighetti, 2013.
- 2 Rilke, 1903.
- 3 From the exhibition statement of So Many Constellations, transl. KN, 2014.
- 4 From an old artist statement, 2013.
- 5 Shusterman, 2012. p. 76.
- 6 I never ended up going because of contesting all plans I had made beforehand, wondering if my previous adventures in butoh, too, were part of the exoticising attitude.
- 7 Phillips, 2012.
- 8 ...burdened with heavy xenophobia and chauvinism behind the smile mask.
- 9 The feeling might as well be called sense, but given my deep affection to Jean-Luc Nancy's writings that in many ways encompass the term, I have decided to stick with the more simple (read: term that doesn't need a chapter of its own) "feeling".
- 10 Isn't it lovely how relevant a commercial Nike® sports equipment slogan can be for art!
- 11 From an old artist statement, 2013.
- 12 Moriyama, 2006. p. 96.
- 13 Hammond, 2013. p. 149.
- 14 From the exhibition statement of Mind the Membrane, 2011.
- 15 I mean performativity as a fluid way of being-through-doing that simultaneously constructs culture, in the spirit of Butler/Derrida, instead of being a mere representation of culture as suggested by others. For more information on the subject, see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Performative—turn>
- 16 Von Hantelmann, 2014. p. 1.
- 17 Von Hantelmann, 2014. pp. 11-12.
- 18 Von Hantelmann, 2014. p. 9.
- 19 It seems to me that according to this view the artwork could well be thought of as a game, and the viewer as a player.
- 20 Goldberg, 1998. p. 98.
- 21 Shusterman, 2012. p. 68.
- 22 Shusterman, 2012. p. 68.
- 23 Shusterman, 2012. p. 72.
- 24 Shusterman, 2012. p. 72.
- 25 From the exhibition statement of Mind the Membrane, 2011.
- 26 Naukkarinen, "Art as a Corporeal Experience", 2008.
- 27 Nancy, 2013. p. 11.
- 28 Situatedness must be historical as well as locational.
- 29 Hintikka, 2010. p. 1.
- 30 Someone more invested in the formation of propositions might figure out how to put it more eloquently, but for the time being let's roll with this one.
- 31 James, 2006. p. 57.
- 32 True story!
- 33 As a manner of conducting oneself in the world.
- 34 Batchen, 2000. p. 140.
- 35 Rilke, 1903.
- 36 Shoot – Photography of the Moment at Parco Factory 26.11.–14.12.2009.
- 37 Shore, 2009. p. 5.
- 38 Shore, 2009. p. 5.
- 39 Martin, 2009. p. 17.
- 40 Martin, 2009. p. 19.
- 41 Miller, 2009. p. 29
- 42 Not to say this was necessarily the case with the works or the photographers

presented in the book.

43 Miller, 2009. p. 31.

44 As long as I know, I am the center of normality. Why not try and tap into that normality? That itself might seem special to someone else, without me even trying, considering how other people seem pretty strange from my point of view.

45 Wallace, 1993. p. 192-193.

46 See: <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/single—entendre>

47 Kelly, 2010. p. 135.

48 Kelly, 2010. pp. 135-136.

49 Kelly, 2010. p. 136.

50 Straight translation from what seems to be *Canis Latinicus*.

51 Wallace, 1993. p. 183-184.

52 From the exhibition application to Photographic Gallery Hippolyte, 2013.

53 Please see the cover of this thesis. It includes documentation shots, the translated exhibition statement, an exhibition map, a shot of the 3D-model I used to plan the installation, the poem the name is based on and a couple of reviews (in Finnish).

54 I once came up with a wonderful name – that I deemed dreadful two days later – during a K-X-P show in club Kuudes Linja. I sent it to myself instantly as an email, underlining how it was of most importance to mention in my thesis how the name came to me during a K-X-P show in club Kuudes Linja.

55 Lacoue-Labarthe, 1999. p. 64.

56 Is Everything Deep Beneath the Surface? was an exhibition together with

Viivi Nieminen. The name came to her in a dream, but I must include it here because it fits so well with the bunch.

57 Upon publishing the name, the reception included a speculation on whether the name was Internet meme language, specifically an inner monologue in the style of "doge".

58 Celan, 1960. p.50.

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# Notice

Due to technical restrictions this PDF lacks the illustrative images glued to the inner margins of the printed version.

Katri Naukkarisen valokuvat syntyvät kepein perustein.

Katri Naukkarisen (s. 1984) näyttely valokuvagalleria Hippolytessä nostattaa perustavaa laatua olevia kysymyksiä valokuvauksen luonteesta. / Läpi valokuvauksen historian on pohdittu valokuvan suhdetta todellisuuteen. On kehitelty hienoja ja enemmän tai vähemmän filosofisia teorioita tästä suhteesta, valokuvan merkityksestä, sen totuuden tai epätoisuuden mukaisuudesta; sen tavasta kuvata tai olla kuvaamatta todellisuutta. / Viime vuosina - kohta jo vuosikymmeninä - yksi valokuvan totuudellisuutta kyseenalaistava juonne ollut korostetun tehty tai lavastettu valokuva. Näin on pyritty riisumaan valokuvalta sen asema yhden totuuden kertojana ja alleviivattu kuvaajan (ja katsojan) merkitystä valokuvan "sanoman" ja sen tulkinnan aktiivisina muodostajina.

#### Ympäristön merkityksellistäminen

Katri Naukkarinen kysyykin, "onko lavastamattomalla valokuvalla sijaa taiteessa?". Tämä kysymyksenasettelu on usein johtanut aika yksiviivaiseenkin vuoropuheluun näiden kahden koulukunnan edustajien kesken. Naukkarisen näyttely ja valokuvat onnistuvat mielestäni kuitenkin aika raikkaalla tavalla kosketamaan tätä aihetta ja antamaan siihen oman kommenttinsa. / Näyttely on rakentunut hyvin erilaisista osasista, mutta kokonaisuudesta muodostuu silti selkeän ehyt tunnelma. Tähän vaikuttanee Hippolyten estradimainen tila, joka jälleen kerran luo lähes hartaan tunnelman näyttelylle. Tietystä näkökulmasta sitä voisi luonnehtia jopa pyhäköksi alttareineen. Naukkarinen on nimittäin sijoittanut suurimman valokuvavedoksen alle pienen pienen rakennelman. / Naukkarisen lähestyminen valokuvaamiseen tuntuu pohjaavan ajatukseen kuvan tietynlaisesta omasta "ilmenemisestä", jonka esteenä kuvaaja yrittää mahdollisimman vähän olla. / Naukkarisen kuvat ovatkin suurelta osin luonnosta ja ympäristöstä, vain muutamassa on ihminen mukana. Näyttelyn nimi So Many Constellations on Paul Celanin runosta, ja sen hengessä näyttelyn luonnehditaan olevan "ihmetys ja huokaus merkitysten äärellä".

Naukkarinen kertoo kepein perustein kuvaamisen metodin olleen vuosien opettelu ja harkinnan tulos: "Opin kuvaamaan vasta irtauduttuani kuvauspäivistä, strategioista ja ennen kaikkea - kuvaideoista: Ideoista koskien kuvia ja ideoista koskien itseäni näiden kuvien toteuttajana. Kuvaamisen, samoin kuin olemisen, on oltava mielekästä tässä ja nyt." / Naukkarisen kuvissa korostuu tämä hetkellisyys, mutta katsoja kiinnittää huomiota myös selkeisiin kuvaajan valintoihin ja ratkaisuihin. Tuossa on käytetty salamaa korostamaan etualan kasvillisuutta, ja tuossa taas kuva rajattu juuri noin. Kuvaajan tietystä intensiivistä ja vaikutuksesta ei pääse koskaan eroon, mutta se ei kai ole tarkoituksaan. Ymmärrän mielestäni hyvin Naukkarisen ajatuksenjuoksua. / On hyvä, että valokuvataide kulkee monia polkuja pitkin, jämähtämättä vain tiettyihin oikeisiin ja arvostettuihin muotoihin. Hedelmällisestä moninaisuudesta ja vuorovaikutuksesta syntynee loppujen lopuksi se kiinnostavin taide.

Abstraktio ja konkretia - Katri Naukkarinen ja Sirpa Päivinen galleria Hippolytessä.  
(Katkelma yhteisarviosta)

Katri Naukkarisen (s. 1984) näyttely valokuvagalleria Hippolytessä lainaa nimensä Paul Celanin (1920-1970) samannimiseltä runolta So Many Constellations. Naukkariselle runon avaushuokaus muodostuu hengästyneisyydeksi kaikkien mahdollisten merkitysten ja niiden yhdistelmien edessä. Tämä onkin näyttelyn pohjavire: uudelleen näkemisen ja merkityksenannon sopimuksenvaraisuuden pohtiminen. Tarjolla on arvoituksia, vapaata assosiaatiota ja rinnastuksia abstraktiin taiteeseen. / Valokuva on vain osa prosessia, jossa Naukkarisen taide löytää äänensä. Yhtä tärkeäksi nousee näyttelytilan installointi, joka on oleellinen juuri uudelleen näkemisen mahdollistamisessa. Gallerian pääsali on yhtä aikaa äärimmilleen jännittynyt ja tyyni kuin herran huone. Naukkarinen on luonut tilaan tarkkaan harkitun rytmin. Se kuljettaa katsetta työstä toiseen tarjoten vuorotellen kiihkeitä kirkaisuja ja meditatiivisia levähdyspaikkoja. Ensimmäiseksi katsojan kohtaa takasei-

nän valtava, punaisen sävyissä uhkaavana ja autoritäärisenä päällekkäyvä Please to Meet You, joka virittää ympärilleen shamaanisen tunnelatauksen. Vedoksen alla oleva pieni valkoinen koroke, jonka päällä makaa valokuvan punaista toistava kahtia murtunut kivi, tuntuu olevan jonkinlainen vaatimaton alttari. Onko kivi uhri vai palvonnankohde? / Samoihin mystiikan tunnelmiin vie valokuvapari Making a Small Circle ja Flock, joka rinnastaa perhealbumin kuvan metsäretkeläisistä ja siniseen taittavan negatiivin jonkinlaisesta noitapiiristä. Kuvat liittävät yhteen niiden muoto, sillä molemmat esittävät ihmisten muodostamaa ympyrää tai piiriä. Katsoja olettaa nostalgiseen kultakehykseen suljetun kuvan olevan joko löytökuva tai jonkun nappaama perhekuva. Tarkempi tarkastelu kuitenkin herättää kysymyksiä: Miksi ryhmä on muodostanut piirin mättäälle? Keitä nämä ihmiset ovat? He vaikuttavat saman ikäisiltä, mutta mikä heitä oikein yhdistää? Kuvaa on myös vaikea paikantaa historiallisesti. Milloin tämä tapahtui? Kun ensi vilkaisulla viattomalta vaikuttava kuva ottaa assosiaatioparikseen pahaenteisen ja tummanpuhuvan kuvan vaaleisiin mekkoihin pukeutuneista naisista, ajatukset laukkaavat kohti mystiikkaa ja kansanuskontoja. Aivan kuin katsoja todistaisi jotain rituaalia. / Myös valokuvat Midnight ja Crying Out Loud synnyttävät rinnastuksen. Molemmat leikittävät valokuvien esitykseen liittyvien normien kanssa: toinen on ylösalaisin ja toinen kyljellään (viittaa tässä kuvien asemaan suhteessa todelliseen kuvaesitykselliseen sisältöönsä, molemmat ovat toki oikein päin teoksina). Näin Naukkarinen tutkii valokuvan mahdollisuuksia abstraktion saralla. Kipeän suomalainen järvimaisema vertautuu Rothkon maalauksiin synnyttäen suorakulmien ja viivojen täyttämän abstraktin sommitelman. Samaa yrittää myös Crying Out Loud, mutta kuvan olemukselliset ominaisuudet pitävät sen liian tiukasti kiinni todellisuudessa. / Abstraktin valokuvan idea on kiintoisa, mutta monesti nähty. Jo Paul Strand (1890–1976) osoitti valokuvan kykenevän maalauksen veroiseen abstraktioon. Naukkarisen ote abstraktion ideaan tuntuu olevan jokseenkin harhateillä. Abstraktien maalareiden, kuten Piet Mondrianin (1872–1944), tavoitteena oli luoda maalauksen keinoin kokemuksellinen esitys maailmasta, joka tarjoaisi katsojalleen realistista maailmasta syvemmän, transsendentaalista tavoittelevan näkymän pyrkien paljastamaan asioiden

olemuksen niiden pinnan tuolla puolen. Samaan sitoutui Strand, jonka minimalistinen todellisuuden absurdiuden osoittava valokuvaus tarjoaa kouriintuntuvia otteita maailmasta. Naukkarisen teokset suhteutuvat abstraktioon varsin eri tavalla. Ne ottavat materiaaliin todellisen maailman, mutta sen sijaan, että kuvat tähtäisivät paljastamaan todellisuuden todellisuuden takana, Naukkarinen turvautuu suhteellisen halpaan temppuun ja yrittää tehdä perinteisen realistisista kuvista abstrakteja leikkimällä vain kuvan orientoinnilla. / Kokonaisuuden puoleensa vetävin teos on ehdottomasti Green Scare. Se miellyttää graafisuudessaan silmää, joskin tämä saa pohtimaan, miellyttääkö teos vain, koska se tuo mieleen sisustusliikkeen kangasprintin tai tapettinäytteen. Green Scaren parina toimii Temporalin pehmeä yömaisema nimeämättömästä tropiikin kaupungista. Kaksikko on tasapainoinen ensimmäisen ollessa kiireinen ja tekstuurin täyttämä ja toisen raskas ja hidas. Teosparissa tärkeää onkin niiden synnyttämä vedon ja työnnon, edestakaisen liikkeen tuntu, joka vie katsojan transsiin. / Naukkarisen luoma kokonaisuus on yhtä aikaa hämmentävä ja selvä. Hänen motiivinsa ja tavoitteensa ovat kirkkaita: ajatuksena on katsoa maailmaa tuorein silmin ja nähdä konventionaalisten merkitysten sijasta uusia ja yllättäviä merkityksiä. Tämän on tarkoitus tapahtua tuomalla yhteen toisiinsa liittymättömiä kuvia ja esineitä, jolloin syntyy assosiaatioita ja tarinoita. Vaikka tila kokonaisuutena lupailee jotakin kiehtovaa, jäävät oivallukset sittenkin vähiin eivätkä teokset tunnu pääsevän lentoon. Jokin jää uupumaan. / Jos Naukkarinen etsii töissään tietä abstraktioon ja vapaaseen assosiaatioon, on Hippolyten Studiosta löytyvä [...].



